

**ADOPTION SERVICES FOR DCFS WARDS**  
**July 30, 2014 – P.T. 2014.15**

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**Section 309.40      Adoption Listing Services**

**a)      Functions of the Adoption Listing Service (ALS)**

The Adoption Listing Service (ALS) manages the statewide listing of Illinois children in need of adoptive resources as well as a listing of licensed Illinois foster and adoptive families who wish to adopt. The ALS provides children and families with matching opportunities through the listing service, national adoption exchanges, the Internet, newspaper and newsletter features and the Heart Gallery of Illinois.

The Adoption Information Center of Illinois (AICI) manages the Adoption Listing Service. Forms referenced throughout these procedures can be obtained from AICI's website (adoptinfo-il.org) or by calling AICI at (312) 346-1516 or (800) 572-2390.

The primary responsibilities of Adoption Listing Service include:

**1)      Management of Collateral Listing Resources**

ALS provides profiles of waiting children on a regular basis to television, newspaper and newsletter features and national adoption exchanges. It also posts profiles of waiting children on the AICI web page, **<http://www.adoptinfo-il.org>**.

**2)      Initial Matching of Listed Children and Families**

On a weekly basis, the ALS runs a computer match comparing the characteristics of the listed waiting children with the characteristics requested by licensed waiting families. The child's caseworker is alerted to all initial computer matches to determine whether the match is, in fact, appropriate for the child. The family and the family's worker are also alerted to all suggested computer matches.

**b)      Procedures for Listing Children**

**1)      Children Who Must Be Listed**

A child must be listed when two basic criteria are met:

- The child needs an adoptive resource; and
- A legal screening, as described below, has determined that adoption is the appropriate permanency plan for the child.

These two criteria do not necessarily occur in sequence. Nor may they happen only once in the life of a case. The more common path would be a determination that the child needs an adoptive resource followed by a referral for legal screening. But a

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child may also have an adoptive resource initially identified at a family meeting, have the legal screening determine that sufficient grounds for termination exist and that adoption is in the child's best interest, and then, for some reason, the adoptive placement fails.

### A) **Verification of the Need for an Adoptive Resource**

The worker shall determine whether the child's current caregiver is an appropriate adoptive resource. The worker shall convene a family meeting with the caregiver and ask the caregiver to complete the CFS 1443, Permanency Commitment by Foster Parent/Relative Caregiver. "Pre-adoptive placements" where the caregiver had previously committed to adopt but is no longer interested or able to adopt shall also be documented on the CFS 1443.

### B) **Legal Screening Supports the Pursuit of Adoption**

All children's cases must have a legal screening to determine whether adoption is in the best interests of the child and that there are sufficient grounds to recommend termination of parental rights. If the outcome of the legal screening determines that adoption is appropriate and the child does not have an identified adoptive resource (confirmed by the completed CFS 1443), the worker shall list the child with ALS within 2 weeks of the legal screening.

When an identified adoptive resource will not be able to honor their commitment after the legal screening, the worker shall convene a family meeting to discuss the issue. The worker shall ensure that a CFS 1443 is completed documenting that the current caregiver does not wish to be considered as an adoptive resource for the child. The worker shall list the child with ALS within 2 weeks.

### C) **Legal Screening**

This process varies slightly between Cook County and Downstate Regions.

#### **Downstate**

The regional screening determines that it is in the best interests of the child and that there are sufficient grounds to refer the case to the State's Attorney for termination of parental rights (TPR).

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### Cook County

A permanency legal prescreening has been conducted with the Department's Office of Legal Services and determined that adoption is in the best interests of the child, that there are sufficient grounds for TPR and a screening date has been set with the State's Attorney's office.

Identification of an adoptive resource is not required for a case to be presented at pre-screening. However, the State's Attorney's office might not file the petition for TPR based on the lack of an adoptive resource.

Workers may occasionally be directed by Administrative Case Reviewers or court personnel to list a child. When this occurs, the worker shall convene a family meeting to discuss the issue. The family meeting shall occur within two weeks from the date of the ACR or court appearance that directed the worker to list the child. The worker shall ensure that a CFS 1443 is completed documenting whether the current caregiver wishes to be considered as an adoptive resource for the child. The worker shall present the child's case at a legal screening before listing the child with ALS. If a legal screening has already occurred, but a previously identified adoptive resource is no longer willing or able to adopt the child, the worker shall ensure that this is documented on the CFS 1443, indicate that the child does not have an adoptive resource and list the child with ALS.

### 2) Children Who Should Not Be Listed

Children should not be listed when;

- The current caregiver is uncertain about adopting the child;
- The child's case has not "passed" legal screening;

**Note:** ALS will permit the worker to list a child even when the child's case does not pass legal screening or the State's Attorney's office will not pursue TPR due to the lack of an adoptive resource. These cases should be listed within two weeks of the legal screening / decision.

- The child does not need an adoptive resource; or
- Adoption is not an appropriate goal for the child.

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**A) When the Current Caregiver Is Uncertain About Adoption**

When the child's current caregiver is uncertain whether he/she is interested in adoption, the caseworker and adoption worker shall determine what the family's issues are concerning adoption and shall develop a plan and timetable to address those issues.

When one or more issues cannot be resolved within 90 days, the child shall be considered in need of an adoptive resource. The worker shall document family meetings and other efforts made to resolve the issues in a SACWIS note.

The supervisor shall review the SACWIS note and shall print, date and initial the note when the assessment is approved. This note can be presented in lieu of the CFS 1443 at the legal screening. If the assessment is not approved, the supervisor shall identify deficiencies and set a timeframe for the worker to complete those deficiencies.

**B) Children Who Should Not Be Listed Due to Adoptive Resource Issues Include Children Where:**

- The current caregivers, following a family meeting, have indicated their interest in adoption, in writing, on a CFS 1443;
- A licensed foster or adoptive family is having pre-placement visits with the child; or
- The parents have executed a Specific Consent that specifies a resource family whom they want to adopt the child and this family meets Department qualifications.

**C) Children Who Should Not Be Listed Due to Permanency Goal Issues:**

- The child's permanency goal is return home or guardianship;
- The child's permanency goal has been changed from adoption to guardianship or return home; or
- The child's permanency goal is independence and the concurrent plan for the child has been changed from adoption to guardianship or return home. Note: If the goal is independence and adoption remains a concurrent plan, the child should be listed.

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### 3) Obtaining an AICI Listing Waiver

When the worker can demonstrate that it would be contrary to the child's best interests to list the child with the ALS due to a mental health condition, the Regional Administrator or POS Agency Director may, after a clinical staffing with the DCFS or POS Clinical Coordinator, approve a waiver to this policy. The waiver shall be documented on the **CFS 430, AICI Listing Waiver**, and must be supported by appropriate documentation by a mental health professional. The waiver must be reviewed and re-approved every 6 months.

Waivers may be used for the following reasons during the listing process:

- To defer the initial listing of the child; or
- To place a child on "hold calls" status when a mental health issue prevents the active pursuit of an adoptive resource.

The use of a waiver to "hold calls" may be appropriate when an adoptive placement disrupts or a child is placed in a residential or psychiatric treatment facility. These events, however, should **not** automatically trigger a waiver request. Documentation of the child's condition by a mental health professional and a determination that it is not in the child's best interest to be listed is still required.

The waiver shall be reviewed by the Regional Administrator or POS Agency Director at least every 6 months.

The worker shall send waiver approvals / reapprovals within 5 business days to:

Department of Children and Family Services  
DCFS Statewide Adoption Coordinator  
17 North State, 7th Floor  
Chicago, Illinois 60602

### 4) Listing Children With ALS

The child's worker shall complete the following tasks to list a child with the ALS within 10 business days of the a legal screening decision recommending that adoption be pursued or, if the child's case has passed legal screening and, subsequently, a CFS 1443 is completed indicating that the child no longer has an adoptive resource:

- A) Complete the **ALS-1, Child Registration Form** and ALS-1a, Listing Eligibility Form. The **ALS-1** must be signed by an authorized agent of the DCFS Guardian;

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**Note:** The Guardian's consent is required for **all** children, whether or not parental rights have been terminated. When parental rights are terminated, the Guardian's consent is required a second time on the **ALS-1** in order to use the child's photo for recruitment purposes.

- B) Obtain the supervisor's signature on the ALS-1 to verify that documentation of diagnosed disabilities exists in the child's record;
- C) For each child 12 years of age or older, obtain a CFS 600-3, Consent for Release of Information, signed by the child, authorizing the child's mental health information to appear in the child's listing;
- D) For each child whose parental rights have been terminated or whose rights are expected to be terminated within 60 days, arrange to have a listing photograph taken. For each child, complete an ALS-6, Professional Photographer Form;

**Note:** Submit the child's photo to ALS only after parental rights have been terminated.

- E) Mail or fax the ALS-1, ALS-1a, a copy of the CFS 1443, the CFS 600-3 (for a child age 12 or older), and the child's photograph (when parental rights are terminated) to:

Adoption Information Center of Illinois  
120 West Madison, Suite 800  
Chicago, Illinois 60602  
FAX: (312) 346-0004

Digital photos may be e-mailed to [info@adoptinfo-il.org](mailto:info@adoptinfo-il.org).

ALS shall notify the worker, in writing, when the listing is received and shall indicate if the listing is complete. If the listing is not complete, ALS shall identify the missing information and instruct the worker to supply that information within 2 weeks.

### 5) **Obtaining Listing Photographs**

The following procedures apply for all photographs used by the ALS listing service.

#### A) **General Requirements**

Charges for the production of one print of the size and type delineated below are eligible for payment.

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- i) The photograph must be taken by a professional photographer;
- ii) Photographs shall be color glossy measuring 7" tall by 5" wide for one child or 5" tall by 7" wide for sibling groups;
- iii) **Do not** fasten the photograph with staples or paper clips to any paperwork as this can damage the image;
- iv) Write or type the child's name and ID number on a label and fasten to the reverse of the photo. Do not write directly on the photo as the writing can bleed through and affect the image;
- v) Payment for a color photograph shall not exceed \$35.00 for an individual child, or \$40.00 for a sibling group of four or less. For sibling groups of five or more, the cost per sibling shall not exceed \$10.00.

### **B) Direct Payment to Professional Photographers**

- i) The worker shall complete an **ALS-6**, in triplicate prior to photographing;
- ii) The worker shall file the pink copy of the **ALS-6** in the child's case record;
- iii) The worker shall present the white and yellow copies of the completed **ALS-6** to the photographer prior to or at the time of the photo session;
- iv) The photographer shall submit the following items to the ALS in order to be reimbursed:
  - Child's photograph (with child's first name and DCFS ID number written on a label adhered to the back of the photo), as soon as available;
  - Completed white copy of the **ALS-6** with the signed copyright release; and
  - Photographer's statement of charges for a color photograph, not to exceed \$35.00 for an individual child, \$40.00 for a color photograph of a sibling group of four or less, or \$10.00 per sibling for groups of five or more.

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### **C) Reimbursement for Department Store or School Photographs**

The ALS will reimburse caregivers or agency workers directly for the actual cost of school or department store photographs up to \$35.00 for a single child, \$40.00 for a sibling group of four or less, and \$10.00 per sibling for groups of five or more. For reimbursement the following shall be submitted to the ALS:

- i) When direct contact with the photographer is possible (for example, Department Store photographs), complete the **ALS-6** and obtain the signed copyright release from the photographer. The pink copy should be forwarded to the child's worker to be placed in the case file. The photographer retains the yellow copy. The white copy should be sent to the ALS with the photograph;
- ii) When direct access to the photographer is not possible (for example, school photographs), please include the name and address of the photographer. The ALS will contact the photographer directly and obtain the copyright release;
- iii) The color photograph of the child or sibling group per the specifications indicated above;
- iv) Receipt or proof of payment for the photograph; and
- v) Full name and address of the person to be reimbursed.

### **D) Obtaining Photographs through ALS**

ALS contracts with photographers and will arrange photo sessions, upon request.

In order to register a child for a group photo session or arrange for an individual session, call the ALS and ask for the Communications Coordinator. The ALS will handle the payment directly and obtain the copyright release.

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### 6) Changing/Updating Listings, Placing a Listed Child on “Hold Calls” Status, and Withdrawing the Listing.

#### A) Adoption Listing Service - Updating

In order to maintain accurate information on the children in the ALS, it is extremely important that pertinent changes of the child’s status be reported to ALS on a regular basis. To report changes, the worker shall contact AICI at (312) 346-1516 and ask to speak to the Recruitment Coordinator.

ALS staff shall enter changes to the child’s listing, requests for “Hold Calls” and requests for withdrawals, when reported by the worker, on the ALS-3, Change Notice Form.

#### B) Status Changes

The child’s caseworker shall note any significant changes in the child’s status on the ALS-3 as soon as the change occurs, and mail or fax the information to the ALS.

Significant changes include:

- Change in legal status (see note);
- Change of placement;
- Change of agency;
- Change of worker;
- Change of permanency goal;
- Change in school grade or classroom (e.g. special ed to regular class);  
or
- Changed relationships with siblings (i.e. addition or deletion of siblings from ALS listing, see note.)

**Note: A change in legal status to TPR requires a listing photo. Similarly, the addition or withdrawal of a sibling requires a new sibling photo.**

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### C) Annual Update

An **annual update** is required in the month prior to the annual anniversary of the child's listing. To complete the annual update, the worker shall review the previous **ALS-1** and note any changes. The worker shall then complete a new ALS-1, include the child's ALS number, and mark "annual update" on the first page of the form.

If parental rights were terminated during the prior year, an authorized agent of the DCFS Guardian shall sign the ALS-1 for Consent for Recruitment Using Child's Photo. If the guardianship status has not changed, a new signature of the guardian is not required.

The worker shall report any change in the child's level of disability on the ALS-1.

The worker's supervisor shall sign the annual update, and ensure that any disability noted on the ALS-1 has been diagnosed and is documented in the child's record.

ALS shall notify the worker, in writing, when the annual update is received and shall indicate if the listing is complete. If the listing is not complete, ALS shall identify the missing information and instruct the worker to supply the missing information within 2 weeks.

**Note:** It is critical to maintain accurate and updated information about a waiting child; therefore, the annual update of listings is mandatory. At Administrative Case Reviews (ACR), the child's worker shall demonstrate that the child's listing is current by showing a printout of the child's listing page from the website or presenting the notification provided by ALS indicating that the listing is current.

### D) Placing a "Hold Calls" Request on a Listed Child

There are times when it is appropriate to take a child's listing out of active status. A child shall be placed on "Hold Calls" by the child's worker when:

- i) The child is having pre-placement visits with a licensed foster or adoptive family with the intent to adopt;
- ii) The child has been on runaway for more than 30 days and a search conducted in accordance with Procedures 329, Locating and Returning Missing, Runaway, and Abducted Children has not revealed his or her whereabouts; or

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- iii) A waiver has been approved by the Regional Administrator or Agency Director following a clinical review.

To put the child's listing on hold, note the reason for the "Hold Calls" on the **ALS-3**, and submit by mail or fax within five working days of receipt of the Tracking Report.

"Hold Calls" status will be reviewed regularly to determine whether that status is still appropriate.

### E) **Withdrawing a Child Listing**

When a child is no longer available for adoption, it is very important to promptly remove the child's listing from the ALS in order to maintain the integrity of the ALS. The worker shall withdraw the child's listing from the ALS when:

- Guardianship has been given to the caregivers by the court;
- The child has been returned home by the court;
- The court has changed the goal from adoption to return home or guardianship, or cannot be provided for in a home environment or independence without a concurrent adoption plan;
- The child's case is closed; or
- The child has been adjudicated delinquent and sentenced to the Illinois Department of Corrections or Department of Juvenile Justice.

Workers shall review the monthly tickler and note any children who meet the criteria for "Withdrawal." To withdraw a child's listing, the worker shall note the reason for the request in the "Withdrawal" section of the **ALS-3** and submit the ALS-3 to the ALS by mail or fax within 5 working days of the receipt of the tickler report.

**Note:** If the withdrawal affects one or more members of a sibling group listed on the ALS and the other siblings remain active, be sure to update the listing for the remaining siblings at the same time.

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**c) Listing Licensed Illinois Families Who Wish to Adopt DCFS Waiting Children**

The ALS registers families in a database of licensed Illinois families who are interested in adopting the State's waiting children.

**1) Families Who May Be Listed in the ALS Database**

A family shall be offered the opportunity to be listed in the ALS database when the family is licensed by the Department in good standing (i.e., not under investigation or on hold for any reason) and has expressed an interest in adopting one or more waiting children who are wards of DCFS. To document that this listing opportunity has been offered, the family and worker shall complete the CFS 448, Adoption Listing Service Family Registration Agreement.

**2) Families Who Should Not Be Listed in the ALS Database**

The worker shall not list a family with ALS when:

- A child has been identified or has been placed with the family for the purpose of adoption;
- The family does not wish to be listed as documented on the **CFS 448**;
- The family is not licensed;
- The family does not want to adopt a waiting child;
- The family's foster care license has expired, been revoked, or is on hold or suspended for any reason; or
- The family has moved out of state.

**3) Procedures for Listing Families in the ALS Database**

Licensing workers must offer families who have indicated an interest in adopting a waiting child and completed a CFS 448, Adoption Listing Service Family Registration Agreement, the opportunity to be listed with ALS within 10 days of the family's receipt of a license. The family's caseworker, licensing worker or family development specialist can help with the listing process, or the family can contact the ALS directly.

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The worker or family shall complete the **ALS-2, Adoptive Family Registration Form**. This form is available from AICI. The family must sign the form authorizing the listing. The completed ALS-2 shall be mailed or faxed to:

Adoption Information Center of Illinois  
120 West Madison, Suite 800  
Chicago, Illinois 60602  
Fax: (312) 346-0004

ALS shall enter the family's information in the Family Listing Database.

If the family has listed themselves directly, the ALS will mail the family's agency a copy of the **ALS-2**. If the family's license is on hold, suspended or expired, the agency worker shall notify the ALS and the family immediately.

#### 4) **Procedures for "Hold Calls" or Withdrawing, and Updating Family Listings**

There are times when it is appropriate to take a family's listing out of active circulation. The criteria and process for an annual update, placing a family on "Hold Calls" status, or withdrawing them from the listing are as follows:

##### A) **Procedures for "Hold Calls"**

The family or their worker may request "Hold Calls" status when:

- The family is not ready for a placement;
- A placement is pending for the family; or
- Other reasons, as specified by the family.

The worker shall submit the "Hold Calls" request to the ALS on the **ALS-3**. The family can initiate the "Hold Calls" status directly by writing or calling the ALS.

Families on "Hold Calls" status shall be reviewed every 6 months. The ALS shall contact the family, asking them to confirm that the "Hold Calls" status is still appropriate. The family's agency will also be requested to verify the "Hold Calls" status.

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**B) Procedures to Withdraw a Family from the ALS Database**

The family or their worker may request to withdraw from the ALS database when the family:

- Is no longer interested in adoption;
- Is no longer licensed;
- Wishes to be withdrawn;
- Has moved out of state;
- Is no longer interested in adopting Illinois' waiting children;
- Has a license on hold or suspended; or
- Other (specify).

The worker shall complete an **ALS-3** when a family meets any of the above criteria. The family can initiate the withdrawal directly by writing or calling the ALS.

**C) Procedures for Annual Update of Family Information**

The annual update of family information is required in the month prior to each anniversary of the family's listing in the database. ALS will notify the family when an update of their information is due. Families will be informed that if their information is not updated, they will be removed from the database and will no longer receive computer matches. Families will also be informed that they can re-list themselves at a later time. To complete the annual update, the family shall review their previous **ALS-2** and note any changes. Families should then complete a new **ALS-2** and return it to the ALS. ALS will mail a copy of the family's updated **ALS-2** to the family's agency.

**D) Transfer of Family License to a Different Agency**

When a family's license is transferred to a different agency, the family's caseworker from the transferring agency shall complete an **ALS-3** noting the change in agency supervision and providing the name and address of the new supervising agency. The worker shall send the completed **ALS-3** to ALS within 3 business days.

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**d) Using Listings to Match Children and Families for Adoption**

The ALS uses its computerized listings of waiting children and potential families to make an initial computer “match” on a regular basis. The following procedures govern this process:

- 1) The ALS shall match listed children with listed families on a weekly basis;
- 2) ALS will verify with the child’s worker that the child is still available for adoption;
- 3) ALS will notify the child’s worker, the family’s worker and the family within 3 business days of any suggested matches that are found. The ALS will share a copy of the **ALS-1** information with the family’s worker, and a copy of the ALS-2 with the child’s worker;
- 4) When a caseworker for a listed child or family is contacted by ALS regarding a possible match or inquiry, the worker shall respond to ALS within 3 business days. The workers for the child and family shall discuss the potential match by phone, and shall exchange written background information within 5 business days if the potential match is appropriate. The child’s caseworker shall notify ALS and the family’s caseworker of a decision about a potential placement within 15 business days of receiving the information.
- 5) Any decisions to proceed to pre-placement visits or placement that require a “Hold Calls” status shall be reported to the ALS according to the procedures listed above;
- 6) ALS staff shall track all suggested matches made to agencies and note them on the Child Activity Report. The Child Activity Report is mailed upon request to workers of listed children.

**e) Inquiring about Listed Children**

To request information on a listed child, an agency or family may call the ALS c/o AICI at (800) 572-2390. ALS staff shall provide the following information, in writing, to workers and licensed foster or adoptive parents who inquire about listed children:

- Name of the contact person for the child; and
- Agency name, address and phone number.

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**Section 309.130                      Placement Considerations**

**1) New Caregiver**

When a child's permanency worker is considering a new caregiver as a possible adoption placement, the worker or adoption worker shall prepare a narrative social assessment of the child's needs and the family's strengths and abilities to meet those needs, following the outline format provided in the **CFS 485, Individual Assessment of a Child for Purposes of Adoption**.

Using the narrative social assessment, the worker shall also document the new caregiver's ability to meet the individual needs of the child on **CFS 2017, Child/Caregiver Matching Tool**. If the child has been in substitute care previous to the adoption placement, the child's portion of the **CFS 2017** should be reviewed and updated, if necessary. If no **CFS 2017** exists for the child, one must be completed now.

**2) Adoption Conversion**

When a child's permanency worker is considering the child's current caregiver as a possible adoption placement, the worker shall prepare a narrative social assessment of the child's needs and the family's strengths and abilities to meet those needs, following the outline format provided in the **CFS 486, Adoption Conversion Assessment Form**.

In addition, the worker shall update the **CFS 2017** that was completed when the child was placed with the current caregiver. If a **CFS 2017** was not previously completed and the current caregiver is being considered as an adoptive placement, the worker shall complete a **CFS 2017** to document the child's individual needs and the caregivers' abilities to meet those needs.

**3) Inter- Ethnic Placement Act Considerations**

If race, culture, or national origin are raised as factors in selecting a particular child's adoption placement, including adoption conversions, per the procedures contained in **Procedures 301, Placement and Visitation Services, Section 301.60, Placement Selection** an individualized assessment must be made and must be based on concerns arising out of the circumstances of the individual case. The **CFS 2018** is used to document this individualized assessment.

**4) Written Report for the Court**

The worker or the adoption worker must also prepare a written report to the court in the child's adoption proceedings.

**ADOPTION SERVICES**  
September 19, 2001 – P.T 2001.24

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**DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES**

Distribution: X & Z

**Policy Guide 2012.05**

**CASEWORKER REQUIRED PRE-ADOPTIVE COLLATERAL CONTACTS  
CFS 486, ADOPTION CONVERSION FORM**

**DATE:** April 20, 2012

**TO:** All DCFS and Private Agency Child Welfare Staff, and Supervisors and Rules and Procedures Bookholders

**FROM:** Richard H. Calica, Director 

**EFFECTIVE:** Immediately

**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Policy Guide is to implement an Office of the Inspector General recommendation that caseworker conduct pre adoptive collateral interviews with at least 3 subjects involved with the adoptive child and family in order to confirm the suitability of the adoptive placement. Previously, workers writing the home-study have interviewed the adoptive parents, and much of the self-reporting, without interviewing any “collateral” subjects, who may have provided information either positive of the arrangement or possibly of concern for the welfare of the child if the adoption were to be finalized. The **CFS 486, Adoption Conversion Assessment** form (attached) has been revised to reflect the new required collateral contacts.

**II. PRIMARY USERS**

Primary users of this Policy Guide are Statewide Adoption Coordinators, their staff, and DCFS and Private Agency Child Welfare Staff, and Supervisors

**III. CASEWORKER HOME-STUDY COLLATERAL INTERVIEWS**

Pre-adoptive Home Studies of wards or former wards, conducted for the certification process of adoptive families, now require caseworkers to interview at the minimum three child and professional collaterals, especially school personnel to objectively ensure the accuracy of the information being provided.



Caseworker doing the home study should interview at least three other persons as collaterals. These collaterals should have contact with the child and/or family, knowledge regarding any special needs of the child and be able to comment on the foster parent's interaction and care of the child. These collateral contacts should be interviewed to ascertain that there are no concerns regarding the foster parent's ability to care for the minor. Should any concerns be noted, then it is the caseworker's responsibility to address them via services or whatever else is applicable prior to proceeding with the adoption.

**Required collateral contacts may include but are not limited to the following people; (Must have at a minimum 3 collateral contacts.)**

1. Teacher/School Personnel/Day Care Provider/0 to 3 provider (one is mandatory depending on the child's age);
2. Licensing worker (Mandatory if Licensed Provider);
3. Medical professional or service provider; or
4. Other person who has regular contact with the child

#### **IV. ATTACHMENTS**

Revised **CFS 486, Adoption Conversion Assessment** form

#### **V. QUESTIONS**

Questions about this policy guide may be directed to the Office of Child and Family Policy at 217-524-1983, by e-mail to OCFP – Mailbox or by fax to 217-557-0692. Persons or agencies not on Outlook can e-mail questions to [cfpolicy@idcfs.state.il.us](mailto:cfpolicy@idcfs.state.il.us).

#### **VI. FILING INSTRUCTIONS**

Please file this Policy guide immediately following Procedures 309.130, Placement Considerations.

**DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES**

Distribution: X & Z

**Policy Guide 2012.07**

**CFS 1800-U, 60+SUBSIDY CHECKLIST FORM; AND  
CFS 486-G, SUBSIDIZED GUARDIANSHIP CONVERSION ASSESSMENT FORM**

**DATE:** June 19, 2012

**TO:** All DCFS and Private Agency Child Welfare Staff, and Supervisors and Rules and Procedures Bookholders

**FROM:** Richard H. Calica, Director 

**EFFECTIVE:** Immediately

**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Policy Guide is to implement an Office of the Inspector General recommendation requiring caseworkers to complete the new **CFS 1800-U**, 60+ Subsidy Checklist form for each child when his/her prospective guardians or adoptive caregivers are age 60 and older.

This Policy Guide also issues the new **CFS 486-G**, Subsidized Guardianship Conversion Assessment form, which must be completed by the caseworker prior to submitting the guardianship subsidy packet to the Adoption Coordinator/Liaison for approval.

**II. PRIMARY USERS**

Primary users of this Policy Guide are Statewide Adoption Coordinators, Adoption Coordinators/Liaisons, their staff, and DCFS and Private Agency Child Welfare Staff, and Supervisors.

**III. PROCEDURES**

The completed **CFS 1800-U**, 60+ Subsidy Checklist form will be reviewed in detail at the Child and Family Team Meeting in conjunction with the assigned Adoption Liaison/Coordinator (in person or by phone), the prospective guardians or adoptive caregivers, and the back-up caregiver (in person or by phone). During the meeting, the Child and Family Team shall discuss the back-up caregiver's role and responsibilities for the child, confirmation that the back-up caregiver is prepared to assume their future role as the caregiver, and determine whether additional permanency planning is necessary. If



additional permanency planning is necessary, the family will be referred to the Child Protection Mediation Program (in Cook County), or to Metropolitan Family Services Older Caregiver Program (in Cook County), or to additional planning or services. If no additional permanency planning is required, the assigned DCFS Adoption Liaison/Coordinator signs the completed **CFS 1800-U** reflecting agreement with the planning. The original signed **CFS 1800-U** shall be maintained in each child's file.

Caseworkers are also required to complete the **CFS 486-G**, Subsidized Guardianship Conversion Assessment form prior to submitting the Guardianship subsidy packet to the Adoption Coordinator/Liaison for approval. The information included in the **CFS 486-G** assists the worker and the agency in determining whether the prospective guardian(s) can meet the needs of the child. The **CFS 486-G** is an assessment tool that documents the family's preparation and also assists in identifying any possible issues or problems with the family's conversion from foster care to guardianship.

#### **IV. ATTACHMENTS**

**CFS 1800-U, 60+Subsidy Checklist Form**  
**CFS 486-G, Subsidized Guardianship Conversion Assessment Form**

#### **V. QUESTIONS**

Questions about this Policy Guide may be directed to the Office of Child and Family Policy at 217-524-1983, by e-mail to OCFP – Mailbox or by fax to 217-557-0692. Persons or agencies not on Outlook may e-mail questions to [cfpolicy@idcfs.state.il.us](mailto:cfpolicy@idcfs.state.il.us).

#### **VI. FILING INSTRUCTIONS**

Please file this Policy Guide immediately following Procedures 309.130, Placement Considerations.

## POST ADOPTION AND GUARDIANSHIP SERVICES

July 30, 2014 – P.T. 2014.15

### Section 309.135 Post Permanency Sibling Contact Agreement

While preparing the subsidy packet, the subsidy worker shall discuss with the prospective adoptive parents/subsidized guardians the importance to the child of developing or maintaining a relationship with his/her siblings (including siblings with whom the child does not yet have a relationship), and the value of preserving family ties between the child and his/her siblings, including the child's need for stability and continuity of relationships with siblings, and the importance of sibling contact in the development of the child's identity. The subsidy worker shall ensure that the child and prospective adoptive parent/subsidized guardian receive the DCFS publication **CFS 1050-95, *How to Connect With Your Brothers and Sisters***.

The subsidy worker shall explain the purpose of a Post Permanency Sibling Contact Agreement and strongly encourage the prospective adoptive parents/legal guardians to enter into an Agreement with the child's siblings for the benefit of the child.

The subsidy worker shall explain that the Agreement is a non-binding document that sets forth future contact between the siblings. The worker shall document in a case note that this information was provided and the names of the persons to whom it was provided.

When the prospective adoptive parents/legal guardians express interest in developing a Post Permanency Sibling Contact Agreement, the subsidy worker shall convene a meeting for that purpose. The subsidy worker shall ensure that there is a person present at the meeting who has information about the children and their placement history. (Most often, the person with the most information will be the permanency worker.) The following persons shall be invited to the meeting:

- the prospective adoptive parents/private guardians;
- birth parents or other care providers, as appropriate (e.g., if a sibling has returned home or is in a non-substitute care living arrangement); and
- the children/siblings (when developmentally and clinically appropriate).

The subsidy worker may invite other persons or service providers (e.g., therapists and mentors) who may be helpful in developing the Agreement or obtaining cooperation of the caregivers.

The subsidy worker shall document the information below on the **CFS 1800-SC, Post Permanency Sibling Contact Agreement**:

- The names of each sibling, regardless of age, and living arrangement. When any sibling is a minor, also include the name of his/her parents, legal guardian, or caregiver.
- If scheduling visits, list the days, times and locations of visits; whether visits will be supervised or unsupervised; and how the siblings, including emancipated and adult siblings, will get to and from the visit locations. If visits are supervised, include name of the person who will supervise and his/her role in the visits.

## POST ADOPTION AND GUARDIANSHIP SERVICES

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- Agreed-upon modes of contact. When other contact between the siblings (besides in person visits) will be allowed, list what contact is permitted (e.g., telephone/cell phone, letter writing, email, video conferencing, etc.), and any limitations on that communication (e.g., not after 8:00 p.m. on school nights); and
- the role of the prospective adoptive parents/legal guardians (and birth parent or other caregiver for children in home of parent or another living arrangement) in implementing the Agreement.

If an emancipated or adult sibling is having trouble obtaining transportation, the subsidy worker shall help that sibling identify services in the community that may provide assistance in resolving transportation issues, or suggest changing the location of visits to make it easier for that sibling to attend.

When the **CFS 1800-SC** identifies a person who is not a party to the Agreement to assist in implementing visitation, and visitation includes a child in the custody or guardianship of DCFS, the subsidy worker shall contact that person, confirm his/her willingness to provide that assistance, and obtain authorization to conduct a person search for prior child abuse/neglect history. The worker shall document the contact and results of the person search in a case note.

At the meeting, the subsidy worker shall encourage the parties to recognize the importance to each child of developing a relationship with his/her siblings, including siblings with whom the child does not yet have a relationship; and consider:

- the value of preserving family ties between each child and his/her siblings, including the child's need for stability and continuity of relationships with siblings, and the importance of sibling contact in the development of the child's identity;
- the physical and emotional safety and welfare of the child;
- the child's wishes;
- the interaction and interrelationship of the children, including the quality of the relationship between the children, and the benefits and potential harms to the children in allowing the relationships to continue or in ending them;
- the child's sense of attachments to his/her siblings and adoptive family, including the child's sense of well being and being valued, the child's sense of familiarity and connectedness, and continuity of affection for the child; and
- any other factors that the worker or caregivers are aware of that are relevant to the best interest of the children.

The subsidy worker shall place the **CFS 1800-SC** with the subsidy packet. The Agreement shall be reviewed at each annual subsidy re-certification.

## **POST ADOPTION AND GUARDIANSHIP SERVICES**

**July 30, 2014 – P.T. 2014.15**

The parties may request that the Agreement be modified or terminated at any time. The party requesting modification or termination shall provide notice to all other parties to the Agreement. If the parties cannot agree to modification or termination, any party may request the assistance of the subsidy worker, or another Department or private agency worker when agreed upon by the parties (including the Department subsidy worker). Any and all terms may be modified by agreement of the parties.

The subsidy worker or permanency worker (as appropriate) shall ensure that the written consent of a child age 14 and over is obtained when there is a modification or change in the terms or conditions of the Post Permanency Sibling Contact Agreement.

**POST ADOPTION AND GUARDIANSHIP SERVICES**  
**July 30, 2014 – P.T. 2014.15**

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## POST ADOPTION AND GUARDIANSHIP SERVICES

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### Section 309.170 Post Adoption and Guardianship Services

#### a) Purpose of Post Adoption and Guardianship Services

The primary purpose of post adoption and guardianship services is to support the goal of permanency in adoption or guardianship. The service needs of families following adoption finalization or guardianship transfer vary greatly. Some families will never need outside intervention; some families will require minimal assistance; and a small percent of the families will require a greater array of more intensive services. A continuum of post adoption and guardianship services is needed because of the differences in families' service needs. Even though the Department is a partner in the development, funding and provision of post adoption and guardianship services, some services are not free of charge. The cost to the client, if any, can be found following the service description.

Post adoption and guardianship services can be preventative, as when provided at the time of adoption finalization, with ongoing support services and adoption assistance, or at the time of the guardianship transfer, through subsidized guardianship. Services are also provided in times of crisis, as in adoption and guardianship preservation services. Services to assist the members of the adoption or guardianship triad obtain information about each other is also available, including identifying information, provided all parties involved agree to release such information.

The **CFS 1800-PAGS, Post Adoption and Guardianship Services Acknowledgement** form shall be provided to the family along with the **CFS 1050-45, Post Adoption and Guardianship Services Booklet** by the permanency worker who is preparing the child and family for adoption or subsidized guardianship. Post Adoption and Guardianship Services and needed contact information must be discussed with the family. One signed copy of the **CFS 1800-PAGS** shall be placed in the case file as evidence that the adoptive parent was provided information about Post Adoption and Guardianship Services. The second copy is to be left with the prospective adoptive/subsidized guardianship family for future reference.

#### b) Providing Post Adoption and Guardianship Services

##### 1) Post Adoption and Guardianship Information and Referral Services

The Department funds a Post Adoption and Guardianship Information and Referral Service (I&R) through the Adoption Information Center of Illinois (AICI) This service is staffed with bilingual capabilities. Through this service, families are able to obtain information about available post adoption and guardianship services and providers such as support and networking groups, mental health providers, therapists, intensive support services from adoption and guardianship preservation providers. AICI may also provide non-identifying information about birth families, as well as search reunification services through the Midwest Adoption Center and Internet sites on adoption, guardianship and other related services.

## **POST ADOPTION AND GUARDIANSHIP SERVICES**

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At the time of the adoption finalization or guardianship transfer, families are also given contact information, including name, number and mailing address of the Post Adoption and Guardianship Subsidy Unit or worker.

### **2) Adoption Assistance**

Adoption assistance services, that are a type of post adoption financial support service, shall be provided to families on behalf of eligible children in accordance with the instructions contained in **Rule 302.310, Adoption Assistance**.

### **3) Subsidized Guardianship**

Subsidized guardianship services, that are a type of post guardianship financial services, shall be provided to families on behalf of eligible children in accordance with the eligibility criteria contained in **Rules 302.410, Subsidized Guardianship Program (KinGap)**.

### **4) Child and Family Education**

The Department provides the following educational services and opportunities for adoptive and guardianship families and children:

#### **A) Educational Advocacy**

This program provides access to an Educational Advisor, an Educational Assistant and a volunteer Educational Advocate to assist adoptive and guardianship families in working with the schools. Families may contact the Regional Educational Advisor's office serving the region where the child attends school. (See **Procedures 314, Educational Services**, for additional information.)

#### **B) On-Site Training**

The DCFS Office of Training, Parent and Caregiver Support offers a variety of training opportunities throughout the State for adoptive and guardianship families. Families can request a printed training schedule by calling the DCFS Office of Training, Parent and Caregiver Support at 877-800-3393. Schedules are also available on the DCFS website ([www.DCFS.illinois.gov](http://www.DCFS.illinois.gov)).

#### **C) DCFS Lending Library**

DCFS maintains a Lending Library service offering books, cassettes, and videos for adoptive and guardianship families, as well as foster families. Catalogs listing titles and descriptions by topic are available on the DCFS website. All books, cassettes and videos are available, may be borrowed free of charge and are mailed to the requesting family with a return envelope enclosed.

## **POST ADOPTION AND GUARDIANSHIP SERVICES**

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### **D) Scholarships**

Youth formerly under DCFS legal responsibility who are now adopted or living with guardians are eligible to apply for DCFS college scholarships. The Post Adoption and Guardianship Information and Referral Call Center and the Post Adoption and Guardianship Subsidy Unit Worker shall refer interested individuals to the DCFS Office of Education and Transitional Services.

### **5) Post Adoption and Guardianship Supports**

The Department provides funding to eligible Purchase of Service (POS) agencies and DCFS regions for the purpose of administering a post adoption and guardianship supports program. This program offers information and support to families who have adopted or assumed guardianship of a child who was under the guardianship of DCFS and served by a DCFS region or by a POS agency.

The eligible POS agencies and DCFS regions initially are asked to provide two components as part of the commitment to the supports:

- A)** Contact person for the Agency: This person will be able to assist families in the future with needs that may arise. The contact person is familiar with services that may be available to the family through the DCFS region or POS agency, the community, or other service providers; and
- B)** Support Groups: The agency provides an opportunity for the families they serve, or once served, to be part of support groups within the agency. The support groups offer the family the ability to establish relationships based on mutual interests and experiences, to identify problem areas, and suggest problem resolution techniques. Professionals within the community may attend the sessions to discuss areas of particular interest to the group.

### **6) Adoption and Guardianship Preservation Services**

#### **A) Who is Eligible**

A family shall be eligible if:

- there is at least one child under the age of 18;
- the child is adopted or guardianship of the child was transferred through DCFS; and
- the child is residing in the home at the time of referral; or
- for whom the plan is to transition the child back into the home;

## POST ADOPTION AND GUARDIANSHIP SERVICES

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or;

- there is at least one child under the age of 18;
- the child had been adopted or guardianship of the child had been transferred through DCFS;
- the child's permanency was disrupted either because of the death, or disability of the adoptive parent or guardian; and
- the child is residing in the home of an adult who expresses interest in becoming the adoptive parent or guardian at the time of the referral; or
- the plan is to transition the child into the home of that adult.

### B) Inclusions/Exclusions

**Inclusions:** Illinois families meeting the eligibility criteria will be accepted on a no decline basis unless the contract is full. To be served, a family must have either a child who was adopted or for whom they are named as guardian, and they must either accept the service or express a willingness to begin receiving services.

The following are examples of the types of problems that are symptomatic of the adoption/guardianship placement or placement history that would be appropriate for Adoption/Guardianship Preservation Services:

- i) a child or children experiencing significant emotional or behavioral issues;
- ii) a child experiencing loss/grief/separation issues; or
- iii) medical/organic/neurological disabilities, e.g., Fetal Alcohol Syndrome effects, Mood Disorders, Attachment Disorders, and other psychiatric diagnoses; and adjustment issues and/or developmental stages relating to adoption/guardianship.

**Exclusions:** A preliminary assessment is required on all official referrals before the family can be excluded from services. The adoption/guardianship preservation provider shall ensure that referrals are made to appropriate resources to meet the needs of families excluded from this program where such referrals are applicable and when services are available. Any family may be excluded based on non-cooperation (e.g., failure to keep appointments, or failure to engage in the agreed treatment plan). Families who do not meet the eligibility criteria may be excluded from service. Exclusion can occur under the following conditions:

## **POST ADOPTION AND GUARDIANSHIP SERVICES**

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- i) a child who is a chronic runaway, is on the run at the time of the referral for service, and whereabouts are unknown;
- ii) a child who is entrenched in gang activity and not amenable to service;
- iii) severe cognitive impairment of a parent or child resulting in their inability to benefit from service;
- iv) the family is no longer willing to parent the child and has ruled out any services to stabilize the placement;
- v) substance abuse by a parent/child, which results in his/her inability to benefit from service; and
- vi) services requested are not related to adoption or guardianship issues.

### **C) Service Components**

Adoption/Guardianship Preservation Services are intensive services provided by local community-based providers under contract with the Department and may include the following:

- emergency response;
- risk assessment;
- initial intensive home-based family assessment and intervention;
- clinical services;
- parent and child support groups;
- case planning;
- case management; and
- cash assistance.

Other support services may be offered at the agency's discretion and availability of services/funding.

## **POST ADOPTION AND GUARDIANSHIP SERVICES**

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### **D) Service Requests**

Requests for Adoption/Guardianship Preservation Services are to be forwarded to the appropriate Adoption/Guardianship Preservation Services provider of the geographical region in which the family resides. Families contact the above directly to request services. The person receiving the initial request will complete a preliminary assessment of the family's request that includes gathering basic information and determining eligibility. The Adoption/Guardianship Preservation Services will be explained to the family and the referral made if such services are deemed appropriate and less intensive post adoption and guardianship services cannot meet the needs of the family.

### **E) Service Time Frames**

A service period is considered a period of 180 days, beginning on the day that services start. A family may receive up to 360 days of service (two service periods) in any 24-month period. Provisions are made in the program plan for exception to maximum periods.

Post adoption and guardianship cases shall be closed at the completion of service or at the end of the 360 days (or up to 540 days with an approved "Request for Extension"), whichever comes first.

A family may be readmitted to the Adoption and Guardianship Preservation Program one year after the end of their last service period.

## **7) Non-Identifying Information, Search and Reunion Services, and Confidential Intermediary Service of Illinois**

### **A) Who May Use the Service**

The Department provides information from DCFS files that helps adult adoptees, adults who were in foster care but never adopted, adoptive or guardianship parents of a minor who was a ward of DCFS, birth parents, current wards, and birth relatives of a person adopted through DCFS locate one another. DCFS has contracted with Midwest Adoption Center to provide this service. There is no fee for this service.

### **B) Requests for Non-Identifying Information**

Adult adopted persons (over the age of 18) and adoptive parents/legal guardians of a minor are entitled to receive certain information from DCFS files, including but not limited to information about biological relatives; a detailed medical and social history of the child, the birth parents and their immediate relatives; and a record of the child's placements before adoption or guardianship. Birth parents may be entitled to limited information about themselves found in their file. Adults over

## **POST ADOPTION AND GUARDIANSHIP SERVICES**

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the age of 18 who were wards of DCFS but never adopted are entitled to information about themselves found in their files.

The amount and type of information in Department files varies from very little to extensive recording of social and medical history. The law does not permit DCFS to release identifying information such as the names and addresses of others.

### **C) Requests for Search/Reunion Services**

Adult adopted persons (over the age of 18) and adoptive parents/legal guardians of a minor may request search services to locate birth parents, siblings or other birth relatives.

Former DCFS wards who were never adopted may request search services to locate birth parents, siblings or other birth relatives.

Search services are also available to birth parents, birth siblings, grandparents or other birth relatives of a child who was adopted. If the sought-after individual is a minor, the search service shall contact the minor's adoptive parent or legal guardian who will make the decision about how to proceed.

### **D) Confidential Intermediary Service of Illinois**

The Department has contracted with Midwest Adoption Center to train and certify individuals to serve as Confidential Intermediaries (CI) and to coordinate the services throughout the state.

Confidential Intermediary Services is among the options available to an adult adoptee, adoptive parent of a minor, birth parent and certain other relatives who are attempting to locate an adult birth relative. Adoption/Guardianship Information and Referral and Post Adoption and Guardianship Subsidy staff will refer these individuals to Midwest Adoption Center. Midwest Adoption Center will provide consultation regarding options available, which may result in a recommendation to pursue CI services. The client will be further informed of the procedures regarding the filing of a petition with the court requesting the appointment of an intermediary. If the court grants the request, the CI will have access to all the sealed information, vital records and to any adoption agency files to help him/her locate the birth relative. Identifying information of each party will only be released upon written mutual consent. For detailed program information see [www.ci-illinois.org](http://www.ci-illinois.org).

An adult adoptee is entitled to free Confidential Intermediary search service to locate one or both birth parents. There is a fee for all other kinds of searches, ranging from \$50 to \$295. Individuals whose income is very low or whose circumstances would make it difficult to pay the

## POST ADOPTION AND GUARDIANSHIP SERVICES

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service fee may be eligible for service at no cost. The service fee includes all hours spent and the expenses incurred by the intermediary in the course of the search.

**There is a fee of \$425 for this service.** The fee includes a search for both the maternal and paternal side of the family. It includes all hours spent and the expenses incurred by the intermediary in the course of the search.

### E) Adoption Registry

The post adoption worker shall refer persons requesting information or services from the Adoption Registry in accordance with **Rule 309.190, Adoption Registry**. The Illinois Department of Public Health maintains the registry.

The Illinois Adoption Registry and Medical Information Exchange (IARMIE) program provides a means by which registrants may authorize or prohibit the release of identifying information to others involved in the surrender or adoption of a person. Contact information, as well as vital medical information, may be exchanged anonymously by an adopted or surrendered person or family members (if the adopted person is deceased) and birth parents or specific family members (if the birth parent is deceased). The availability of medical information is will depend on whether the parties to an adoption voluntarily register with IARMIE and to agree to exchange this information.

The following parties are eligible to register with IARMIE:

- Adult adopted person – 21 years of age or older
- Adult surrendered person – 21 years of age or older
- Adoptive parent – adopted person must be younger than 21 years of age
- Surviving relative of deceased adopted/surrendered person – adult child of deceased adopted/surrendered person or remaining parent of a minor child or the adoptive parent
- Surviving relative of deceased birth parent – adult child (not placed for adoption), sister or brother to the deceased birth parent
- Legal guardian

**This service is free if the Medical Information form is completed and an authorization to release information is signed. To obtain a Medical Information form or for more information, contact the Illinois Adoption Registry either by e-mail at [DPH.Vitals@illinois.gov](mailto:DPH.Vitals@illinois.gov) or by calling the Illinois Department of Public Health Division of Vital Records toll-free at 877-323-5299. Without a completed Medical Information form, there is a \$40 fee for this service.**

## POST ADOPTION AND GUARDIANSHIP SERVICES

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### 8) Other Services

Post adoption staff shall refer members of the adoption or guardianship triad to the Adoption and Guardianship Information and Referral Service for other services available in the community, when such services are appropriate. These services include, but are not limited to: therapists sensitive to the issues of adoption and guardianship, education services, mental health agencies, child welfare agencies offering post adoption and guardianship services, financial information and post adoption support groups.

Post adoption and guardianship staff shall refer adoptive and guardianship families to the Department of Human Services for such services as day care, and in-home services to enable children with disabilities to remain at home. The Social Security Administration may also be a referral source for adoptive and guardianship families.

Families can be referred to the Department of Public Health for teen pregnancy services and birth certificates.

Referrals can be made to the Department of Human Services for 21 year olds who are developmentally or physically disabled for financial and medical services.

#### A) Directory of Services

The Post Adoption and Guardianship Information and Referral Service shall maintain a directory of services that identifies the post adoption and guardianship services available in the State. I&R staff will meet monthly with DCFS regional post adoption and guardianship staff to update information available locally. Post adoption and guardianship workers shall be knowledgeable about the post adoption and guardianship services available in their community. Information on available Post Adoption and Guardianship Services shall be made available to persons upon request.

#### B) The CFS 1050-45, Post Adoption and Guardianship Services Booklet

The **CFS 1050-45** is a publication detailing the Department's post adoption and guardianship services, supports, contact names, and phone numbers are available to families. Appropriate Department or POS staff will provide a copy of the booklet, also available in Spanish, to families prior the finalization of an adoption or transfer of guardianship. Periodically an updated copy of the booklet will be sent to families receiving an adoption assistance or subsidized guardianship. Staff can obtain copies of the **CFS 1050-45** by placing a request through the Central Stores liaison. It can also be accessed online through the DCFS website.

**POST ADOPTION AND GUARDIANSHIP SERVICES**  
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# DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

## Policy Guide 2018.07

### PROCEDURES 309 APPENDIX A THE ADOPTION TIMELINE AND REVISED FORMS

**DATE:** May 1, 2018

**TO:** All DCFS and Private Agency Permanency Workers and Supervisors,  
Adoption Coordinators and Adoption Staff

**FROM:** Beverly J. Walker, Acting Director

**EFFECTIVE:** Immediately

#### I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy Guide is to issue the Adoption Timeline in order to guide casework and adoption staff through the critical Permanency process of transitioning, in a timely manner, a child or youth in care who cannot return home, from the foster care system into a lifetime family and home. This timeline offers acceptable timeframes during each step of the way and outlines in chronological order the necessary casework activities to achieve permanency for children in care. Following the termination of parental rights (TPR), parents have sixty days to appeal the TPR decision however; workers must continue to work the case through this period in order to shorten the time that children remain in foster care. Even though guardianship cases follow a slightly different path, this timeline may be used for guardianship cases. Following the formal policy review process The Adoption Timeline will become Appendix A, of Procedures 309, Adoption Services for Children for whom the Department of Children and Family Services is Legally Responsible.

Attached with this Policy Guide are several forms that have been updated with the help of the Office of Legal Services and Adoption staff, supervisors, and administrators working through a process called “Lean Management,” whose goal is to find ways to streamline the permanency process for youth in care. To that end for Adoptions, the CFS 486 and CFS 411 have been combined and eliminated, and replaced with the CFS 411-A, Report of Investigation for Adoption. The CFS 411-A will be used to create both the Initial Report of Investigation and the Final Report to the Court. For Subsidized Guardianship, the CFS 486-G and the CFS 411 have also been combined and the CFS 411-G shall be used in the same manner as mentioned above.

#### II. PRIMARY USERS

The primary users of this Policy Guide are POS and DCFS permanency workers and supervisors, DCFS and POS adoption workers, coordinators, their supervisors and managers.



### III. THE ADOPTION TIMELINE

**a) Current Permanency workers (caseworkers) shall:**

- Review the entire child file, family file and licensing file in preparation for legal screening, Termination of Parental Rights (TPR), and full disclosure;
- Ensure there is a current certified legible birth certificate (see Procedures 302.390 for assistance in obtaining a certified copy of the child's birth certificate) or proof of citizenship in the file;
- Ensure that all court orders are in the file (legible and name is as it appears on the child's birth certificate);
- Ensure documentation of all legal parents has been identified and paternity has been established through birth certificate, court order, paternity test, Voluntary Acknowledgment of Paternity, marriage, or some other means;
- If applicable, ensure that a copy of a death certificate for the child's parent(s) is in the file;
- If it has been determined that the child meets the criteria for the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), ensure that all required documentation of compliance with ICWA is in the case file;
- Ensure that a social security number has been secured for each child;
- Obtain all necessary medical, mental health, educational documentation for the child, and ensure that they are included in the hard copy file;
- Ensure that all needed services are in place;
- Ensure that the caregiver understands the importance of the Lifebook and assists the child in continuing to update their Lifebook.

**b) The Court-set goal changes from return home to substitute care pending TPR (24) (Cook) or at Legal Screening (Downstate) - Current Permanency worker (caseworker) shall:**

- Ensure the child is listed with Adoption Listing Services if an adoptive resource has not been identified, and it is in the child's best interest;
- Ensure the completion of a Permanency Commitment Meeting with Caregivers and document on the Permanency Commitment By Foster Parent / Relative Caregiver (CFS 1443);
- If the current caregiver(s) agree to adoption or guardianship of the child, complete and submit the CFS 906- E/906-1E in order to update the Living Arrangement (LIVAR) type to reflect the adoptive/guardianship placement (FHA or FHG);
- Ensure the caregivers' and all household members' background checks are updated as required per policy for licensed or unlicensed homes as applicable;
- Ensure the caregivers are referred to Adoption/Guardianship Certification Training;
- Ensure completion of the Initial CFS 411-A or CFS 411-G, Report of Investigation either for Adoption or Guardianship;
- Ensure completion of the CFS 1427, Legal Screening Form and the CFS 1427-A, Legal Screening Checklist;
- Ensure completion of the Legal Screening process.

- c) Case approved at legal screening - Current Permanency worker (caseworker) shall:**
- Ensure the completion of the Child Assessment for Adoption for children who do not have an adoptive resource (CFS 485);
  - Ensure -referral to the DCFS/POS Adoption Unit is completed by submitting a complete legal screening packet to the Unit within 10 business days of passing legal screening;
  - Ensure the prospective adoptive parents/guardians are referred to the DCFS website or the DCFS Advocacy Office for Children and Family Services for the adoption attorney list.
- d) Child is legally free for adoption**
- Parents sign consents/ surrenders to adoption and/or rights are terminated & court set goal is changed to adoption (25).
- e) Within 30 calendar days of a goal of Adoption (25) or Guardianship (26), Adoption Specialist shall:**
- Ensure child/children are legally free by voluntary or involuntary termination of parental rights and documentation is in the file;
  - Ensure full disclosure is completed and selection of the adoption/guardianship placement is confirmed by completion of the Affidavit of Information Disclosure for Adoption/Guardianship (CFS 470-H);
  - Ensure prospective parents or guardians contact their adoption attorney;
  - Ensure confirmation of subsidy eligibility, complete CFS 1800A-A;
  - Ensure completion of CFS 1800 B-A, subsidy application with prospective adoptive parent (s) or guardian (1800 B-G);
  - Ensure completion of the subsidy agreement including all supporting documentation (CFS1800 C-A, or CFS 1800 C-G);
  - Ensure the completion of the Final Report of Investigation (CFS 411-A, or CFS 411-G);
  - Ensure all draft subsidies and supporting documents are submitted to the attorney.
- f) Within 30 calendar days of receipt of the subsidies, Attorney shall:**
- Review subsidy w/clients;
  - Sign the Payment to Attorney form (CFS 1800-D);
  - Notify agency of requested changes/ corrections;
  - After changes are made, attorney approves subsidy;
  - Ensure the family signs the subsidy.
- g) Adoption worker shall ensure completion of subsidy packet using the CFS 1800-T-A, or CFS 1800 T-G.**
- h) Responsible Agency submits subsidy to the DCFS Adoption Unit for Approval no later than 60 days after receipt**

**i) Within 30 calendar days of receipt of the subsidy packet**

- DCFS Adoption Unit reviews and requests corrections;
- Responsible Agency makes corrections;
- DCFS Adoption Unit reviews and approves within 30 calendar days of receipt of packet;
- DCFS Adoption Unit sends to the Federal Financial Participation Unit (FFP) for review and approval;
- Packet is reviewed by FFP and requests corrections if necessary;
- Once packet is complete, an approval notification is sent to the DCFS Adoption Specialist and Supervisor;
- Adoption Specialist returns partial legal subsidy packets back to agency to move forward with adoption finalization;
- Responsible Agency notifies Attorney and provides legal documents (i.e.: consents, CFS 411-A, CFS 411-G).

**j) Family goes to Adoption Court**

- The adoption or guardianship is finalized in the court!
- Adoption worker ensures the required case closing and opening paperwork is submitted to the appropriate DCFS Adoption Unit within working 10 days of finalization;
- DCFS Adoption Unit sends a copy of the Adoption Decree to FFP;
- DCFS Adoption Unit sends a letter to the adoptive family identifying the DCFS Post-Adoption Specialist assigned to the case.

**k) DCFS opens a Subsidy Case**

- The DCFS Adoption Unit ensures the Adoption Assistance case is opened;
- The DCFS Adoption Specialist monitors the case throughout the life of the subsidy to ensure that the child is receiving all needed services and that the family is receiving any needed adoption preservation services.

**V. NEW OR REVISED FORMS**

**CFS 411-A, Report of Investigation for Adoption (New)**

**CFS 411-G, Report of Investigation for Guardianship (New)**

**CFS 470-H, Affidavit of Information Disclosure for Adoption/Guardianship (Revised)**

**CFS 1427, IDCFS Statewide Legal Screening for Termination of Parental Rights or Expedited Adoption (Revised)**

**CFS1427-A, Statewide Legal Screening Packet (Revised)**

**CFS 1800 T-A, Adoption Assistance Case Record Checklist (Revised)**

**CFS 1800 T-G, Subsidized Guardianship (KinGAP) Case Record Checklist (Revised)**

**CFS 1800-U 60+ Subsidy Checklist (Revised)**

Staff should start using the new combined forms, **CFS 411-A** and **CFS 411-G**.

## **VI. OBSOLETE FORMS**

**CFS 411, Report of Investigation (Rev 8/2013)**

**CFS 486, Adoption Conversion Assessment (Rev 6/2012)**

**CFS 486-G, Subsidized Guardianship Conversion Assessment (Rev 6/2012)**

**CFS 426, Adoption Placement Agreement (Rev 3/98)**

Staff should start using the new combined forms, **CFS 411-A** and **CFS 411-G**.

## **VII. QUESTIONS**

Questions regarding this Policy Guide may be directed to the Office of Child and Family Policy at 217-524-1983 or e-mail to OCFP on Outlook. Persons and agencies not on Outlook can e-mail questions to [cfpolicy@illinois.gov](mailto:cfpolicy@illinois.gov).

## **VIII. FILING INSTRUCTIONS**

Please file this Policy Guide immediately following Procedures 309.170.

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